

E. Ben-Moshe

The “Hachnoses Orchim^{*}” Society

At the head of the important institution “*Hachnoses Orchim*” stood simple Jews, men of the people from a variety of circles, who took it upon themselves to observe the great *mitzvah* of our father Abraham’s - the fine trait of “*Hachnoses Orchim*”.

These activists were all-year-round Jews and of varying occupations - small retailers, tailors, cobblers, market-stand owners, as well as wagon-drivers.

After a wagon-driver, for example, had driven around all day with his *dorożka* [Pol.; cab; hackney], and waged a fierce war with the Polish competition for his wretched livelihood or [from] the joiner to the cap-maker who, with hard labour and sweat, barely earned their little piece of bread - all these Jews, who themselves lived in great poverty in narrow flats in the attics and cellars, with a house full of children, *bli-ein-hora*^{**}, and, on top of that, weakened their heads for worrying how to acquire a dowry for their daughters who were growing up - these same Jews still found the time and patience for social work for poor Jews, who came to Częstochowa and had nowhere to lay their heads.

These same Jews, found in “*Hachnoses Orchim*” a home, an opportunity to spend the night in a clean bed in a warm room and to even eat a *wieczera* [Pol.; supper] or to drink a warm glass of tea before sleep.

These dear, tormented and hardened Jews did not live just for themselves, but always made sure, in fact, to fulfil the verse “*that thy brother may live with thee*” [Leviticus 25:36]!

These poor men of the people created, in every town including Częstochowa, institutions which so markedly displayed the noble sentiments of fraternity and helping others!

The fine deeds of this sympathetic institution have remained in our memory. But, sadly, we have not found any material according to which we could also immortalise the names of these activists. They conducted their sacred work modestly. They never desired any fame and as it turns out, their wish was fulfilled.

They have remained like the “Unknown Soldiers”, who were granted the great honour of our teacher Moses, of whom we know that “*but no man knoweth of his sepulchre*” [Deuteronomy 34:6]!

Glory and respect to these “Missing Soldiers” and may their holy souls be forever entwined in the thread of the eternal life of the Eternal People!

* [Translator’s note: Pronounced “Hachnuses Orchim” in Poland; Heb.; lit., “Taking in Guests”, i.e. hospitality to poor wayfarers.]

** [Translator’s note: Pronounced “Bli-Ayn-Hure” in Poland; Heb.; “without evil eye”; An expression said to ward off the evil eye or bad luck in general.]



The committee of the "Hachnosos Orchim" Society in Częstochowa

**1.) Mendel Epsztajn 2.) Abram Epsztajn 3.) Szyja Wilinger 4.) Szlojme Epsztajn 5.) Majer Meryn 6.) Majer Nudelman 7.) Szaja Oberman
8.) Alter Neumark 9.) Berisz Lenenberg 10.) Aron Essig 11.) Szmul Zilberberg 12.) Szlojme Gryca 13.) Szymon Meryn 14.) Herszel Epsztajn
15.) Szyja Makowski and 16.) Mojsze Meserman**